

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## **World Water Day 2011 Think Globally, Act Locally**

**World Water Day**, observed annually on March 22, highlights the importance of freshwater and the sustainable management of freshwater resources. The international celebration and initiative grew out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. The theme for this year's event is ***Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge***, and aims to spotlight and encourage governments, organizations, communities and individuals to actively engage in addressing the challenge of urban water management.

### **Water and urban growth by the numbers**

- Half of humanity now lives in cities and, within two decades, nearly 60 percent of the world's population -5 billion people- will be urban dwellers.
- Urban growth is most rapid in the developing world, where cities gain an average of 5 million residents every month.
- The exploding urban population growth creates unprecedented challenges, among which provision for water and sanitation have been the most pressing and painfully felt when lacking.
- One out of four city residents worldwide, 789 million in total, lives without access to improved sanitation facilities.
- **497 million people in cities rely on shared sanitation. In 1990, this number was 249 million.**
- **27 percent of the urban dwellers in the developing world do not have access to piped water at home.**

Coping with the growing needs of water and sanitation services within cities is one of the most pressing issues of this century. Sustainable, efficient and equitable urban water management has never been as important as in today's world.

### ***What can you do locally?***

Water For People is a national organization founded by the American Water Works Association working to bring clean water and sanitation through small, sustainable projects in several developing countries. The people in these communities work with Water For People staff on developing and maintaining the projects. In Sacramento the Water Education Foundation is the sponsoring organization for the local chapter of Water for People. The chapter is sponsoring a fund-raising event Tuesday, March 31 at 6 p.m. at the Urban Hive, 1931 H Street. Come for free hors 'oeuvres, live music by classical guitarist Elizabeth Busch, stories from the field by World Water Corps member Rafael Maestu about his experiences with Water For People in Central and South America, and a raffle and silent auction with incredible items including a Bay-Delta tour valued at \$650! For more information, see [the event poster here](#). call Erica Bishop at 916-418-8302 or visit [www.waterforpeople.org](http://www.waterforpeople.org).